

## **Analysis of existing migratory data production systems and major data sources in Romania**

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## List of acronyms and abbreviations

DAI - Directorate for Asylum and Integration (*Direcția Azil și Integrare*)

GII - General Inspectorate for Immigration (*Inspectoratul General pentru Imigrări*)

MIA - Ministry of Internal Affairs (*Ministerul Afacerilor Interne*)

NAC - National Agency for Citizenship (*Agentia Națională pentru Cetățenie*)

NIS - National Institute of Statistics (*Institutul Național de Statistică*)

Covasna County Statistical Office (*Direcția Județeană de Statistică Covasna*)

Harghita County Statistical Office (*Direcția Județeană de Statistică Harghita*)

Ministry of Internal Affairs – Directorate for Persons' Record and Database Management (*Ministerul Afacerilor Interne – Direcția pentru Evidența Persoanelor și Administrarea Bazelor de Date*)

National Register of Persons' Record (*Registrului Național de Evidență a Persoanelor*)

Public Services for Persons' Record (*Servicii Publice Comunitare de Evidență a Persoanelor*)

Public Services for Persons' Record of Bucharest, District 1 (*Direcția Generală de Evidență a Persoanelor a Municipiului București, Sector 1*)

## Executive Summary

Our report outlines the main features of the Romanian data production system on migration and population stock. Previously a common methodology was elaborated by the Demographic Research Institute in Hungary and participant research institutes in order to gain comparable descriptions for all eight SEEMIG countries. According to this methodology, we focused both on administrative and statistical data sources.

The migration-related administrative data sources in Romania are the population register (*evidența persoanelor*), which is a comprehensive database held by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, and the different registers of foreigners. Immigrants (who arrived for at least 3 months in Romania) from EEU/EEA and the Swiss Confederation are registered separately from third-country citizens. Yet another register is that of asylum seekers and aliens who gained some form of protection in Romania. It is important to highlight that the registers of immigrants are not integrated into the population register, as the latter contains personal data only of Romanian citizens. The population register, however, contains data of all Romanian citizens, whether or not they reside in Romania. The citizens having legal domicile are registered in the locality where their addresses belong (and not at the place of their usual residence if this differs from the official address), whereas those who do not have legal domicile in Romania (for instance, those who live abroad) are registered at their last permanent address. New Romanian citizens who do not have residence in Romania (ethnic Romanians from neighboring countries who gained Romanian citizenship for instance) are (at least theoretically) registered too in the population register (in Bucharest).

In the context of intensive out-migration, the number of persons registered in the population register considerably exceeds the size of the usually resident population. To illustrate this, at the time of the parliamentary elections in 2012, the official number of persons entitled to vote was 18.4 million, whereas the official number of usually resident adult population – delivered by the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) – was 17.4 million.

It has to be pointed out that there is a difference in definition between the legal population of Romania (the totality of citizens whether or not they reside in Romania) and the usual population of Romania (which, in accordance with the United Nations' recommendations, is defined as the totality of persons residing usually in Romania irrespective of their citizenship). While the population register (as well as the majority of administrative institutions, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, for example) deals with the legal population, NIS statistics use the definition of usual population. Thus, there is no steadily used definition for the term population behind the system of population registration in Romania.

This incoherence is closely related to the fact that the systems of registration are not (or are just partially) integrated. The registration of demographic events is closely linked to the administrative procedures, yet the National Institute of Statistics uses its own paper-based questionnaires in the registration of deaths, births, immigrants and emigrants. Moreover, the primary administrative institutions responsible for registration do not transfer directly data to NIS.

Annual stock data on Romanian population (delivered as official figures) are calculated by the NIS based on the last census results at the level of local administrative units by using the cohort component model. For these calculations, the NIS uses data from exhaustive surveys on immigrant and emigrant flows, carried out in cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA). The responsible bodies for data collection are the Ministry for Internal Affairs, the General Inspectorate for Immigration (in the case of immigrants) and the Directorate for Persons' Record and Database Management (in the case of emigrants), respectively. The data collection is made through a computerized interface designed by the MIA.

Whereas vital statistics are relatively accurate, flow statistics on immigration and emigration capture only a very tiny segment of the effective migration processes. This is partly due to the definitions used for the terms immigration and emigration. Immigrants are defined as foreign citizens who come to Romania in agreement with Romanian authorities to settle their residence in the country. Here, the problem is related to the condition that immigrants are foreign citizens. After 1990, Romanian authorities offered through a preferential treatment Romanian citizenship for ethnic Romanians residing in neighboring countries, primarily for Romanians from the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. According to this preferential treatment, ethnic Romanians could obtain Romanian citizenship even without residence requirements. Therefore, if an ethnic Romanian from Moldova or Ukraine who formerly obtained Romanian citizenship settles his/her residence in Romania, he/she will not appear in migration statistics. According to the procedure of (re)acquiring<sup>1</sup> Romanian citizenship, new Romanian citizens have to register themselves in the population register. In case they have permanent or temporary residence in Romania, they have to register themselves at the local authority where their residence belongs. In case they do not have residence in Romania, they have to register themselves in Bucharest (Sector 1, Public Services for Persons' Record), as Romanian citizens without residence in Romania. The problem is that the MIA does not deliver information to the NIS on new Romanian citizens; and as a consequence, they are not taken into account in NIS annual data on population stock.

Emigrants are defined as Romanian citizens who settle their residence abroad in agreement with Romanian authorities. The major problem encountered here is that (similarly to other sending countries) Romanian authorities have few tools to induce the (de)registration of emigrants. If we compare the Romanian emigration statistics with the immigration statistics of the main receiving countries, the results will be shocking. According to the World Bank's statistics, in 2010, 2.8 million Romanian citizens resided abroad. In the time period between 2001 and 2011, the number of emigrants registered by the Romanian authorities was just about 128,000 persons. If we look at the flow statistics of the main host countries, we will realize that the Romanian emigration statistics captures less than 10 percent of the legal outflows from Romania.

These failures have further severe consequences for annual calculations of population stock in the inter-census periods. NIS calculations systematically overestimate the country's stable population and the extent of this overestimation has considerably increased over time (due to the intensification of out-migration of Romanians). Reported numbers show that the NIS overestimated the population with 1.7 percent in 1992, with 2.8 percent in 2002, and with 12.7 percent in 2011. Taking into account the later severe overestimation, one can conclude that none of the human development and demographic indicators delivered by the NIS can be considered reliable.

Our most important recommendation towards the Romanian stakeholders is that an integrated system of registration should be elaborated. A precondition of this is to adopt coherent and operative definitions, and registering the population according to different categories (new citizens with and without residence in Romania, usually resident foreign and Romanian nationals, Romanian nationals without legal domicile, etc.). In order to achieve a well functioning integrated system, a further important issue that should be brought into effect is the re-conceptualization and remodeling of the cooperation between different institutions engaged in population registration. As a final remark, we consider that for a better registration of effective outflows international assistance and local scientific inputs are needed by Romanian authorities.

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Romanian legislation, Romanians from the territories of interwar Greater Romania can reacquire the Romanian citizenship, which they lost following the annexation and subsequent incorporation of certain territories by neighboring states.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report outlines the main features of the Romanian data production system on migration and population stock covering both administrative and statistical data sources. The problem is related primarily to the changes occurred in the character of the international migration in the last decades. During the period of state-socialism, the territorial mobility of the Romanian citizens was controlled and drastically restrained by the state authorities. This was true not only for emigration, but for tourism as well. According to the legal norms of that period, passports were held by the police and an ordinary Romanian citizen had the right to get his/her passport and to cross the border only once in two years. In practice, the restraints were even more severe, as from the early 1980's the applications were more and more frequently rejected. In spite of the rigid control of the territorial mobility (especially the international migration), the number of emigrants was relatively high. In the time period between 1960 and 1989, the number of emigrants registered by the Romanian authorities was more than 700.000. This is due to the fact that the purpose of the restrictive exit policy was not to keep the emigration rate as low as possible, but to control the outflows and the selection of who could and who could not migrate. (Horváth 2004: 63) It was a prevalent practice throughout Eastern Europe to encourage or force the emigration of the regime's political opponents. In Romania, however, the main selection criterion was the ethnic background of the migrant.

After the change of the political regime in 1990, the restrictive exit policy ended. So, the Romanian state authorities have not restricted the free movement of the citizens anymore. But the change of the migration regime/system had an (unexpected) byproduct: the Romanian state was not able to administer, but not even to register the process of international migration. This is why neither the stock, nor the flow data capture the international migration in Romania. It may sound harsh, but – because of the very intensive process of international migration – the system of population register in Romania has practically collapsed.<sup>2</sup>

Two points seem at place here. On the one hand, the problem caused by unregistered migration is not a specific Romanian phenomenon. Hence, our Romanian case study might be instructive for other sending countries too. It is a general phenomenon that the authorities of sending countries have few instruments to induce the registration of emigration. In fact, all sending countries (from countries participating in the SEEMIG project see specifically Bulgaria and Serbia) have to face this problem, even if not quite to the same extent as Romania. On the other hand, the unregistered migration is not a new phenomenon in our country. The 1992 and 2002 censuses already highlighted a significant unregistered population loss compared to calculations made by the National Institute of Statistics (NIS). However, the present situation of the Romanian statistical data production system (because of the huge amount of unregistered migrants) is qualitatively different from the situation in other countries or in previous periods of the Romanian migration-history. In fact, we do not even have an approximate number regarding the size of the country's population currently. The figures of the main data sources (the population register, the official calculations made by NIS, and the preliminary results of the 2011 census) are entirely different. This situation affects the whole Romanian data production system. Since the final results of the 2011 census have not been published yet, we do not have accurate figures regarding the age structure of the Romanian

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<sup>2</sup> In 2006, the author of this study, in collaboration with the Demographic Research Institute of Hungarian Central Statistical Office, has conducted a survey research in Transylvania (14 counties in Romania). The sample was based on the population register (more exactly, on publicly available electoral lists). One of the shocking results of this survey is that 18% of 11.000 randomly selected respondents were not residing at their official permanent addresses anymore. In fact, approximately two thirds of the absentees resided permanently abroad (see Kiss – Kapitány 2009).

population. And given the uncertainties regarding the reference population, all demographic and human development indicators are affected and distorted, from the total fertility rate to infant mortality, for instance.

The above mentioned problems of statistical data production have, of course, severe policy and other politically relevant consequences. The lack of adequate data hinders the elaboration of policies regarding sectoral or regional development.

## 2. DATA SOURCES AND RESPONSIBLE AUTHORITIES

### 2.1. Administrative (register-based) data sources

#### 2.1.1. The population register

The first and (administratively) most important data source on population stock is the population register (*evidența persoanelor* in Romanian). This is a centralized and computerized database held by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) – Directorate for Persons' Record and Database Management (*Ministerul Afacerilor Interne – Direcția pentru Evidența Persoanelor și Administrarea Bazelor de Date*).<sup>3</sup> The Directorate of Persons' Record and Database Management functions according to the Government Ordinance no. 84/2001 and the Government Emergency Ordinance no. 97/2005. The actual methodological norms (currently in force) concerning its functioning were set down by the Government Decision no. 1375/2006. This directorate is coordinated by the MIA but it has its own distinct legal personality.

In Romania, the population register was established in 1949, when (virtually) all Romanian citizens were registered and supplied with identity cards (*buletin de identitate*). Legal procedures for setting up a computerized system, the National Register of Persons' Record (*Registrului Național de Evidență a Persoanelor*), started in 1990, but actually the registration was made manually and paper-based until 2006. (Tompea–Năstută 2009: 220) The system created after 2006 contains and stores personal data of Romanian citizens in a single database. The population register stores the following personal data: the personal identification number (*cod numeric personal* – CNP), the date and place of birth, the parents' names and their dates of birth, marital status, permanent address, educational attainment, occupation, military status.

Another important change in the management of the population register occurred in 2005, when the fill-up of identity cards and other official documents, and the registration of changes regarding one's status respectively, were transferred to local authorities (the mayor's office in case of towns and cities and the county councils for communes). Now the so-called Public Services for Persons' Record (*Servicii Publice Comunitare de Evidență a Persoanelor*) are functioning under a double coordination: the local authorities and the MIA. The Public Services for Persons' Record collects data which are integrated into a common database held by the MIA. The Directorate for Persons' Record and Database Management has the duty to coordinate and check the activity of all Public Services for Persons' Record (which is otherwise subordinated to local authorities, among others financially). The integrated database is accessible only on the level of the MIA.

In the population register are registered (only) the Romanian citizens irrespectively of their country of residence (whether or not they reside in Romania). Citizens with legal residence in Romania are registered at their official permanent addresses (and not at their usual residence, if this differs from the permanent address). Citizens who reside abroad and do not have a permanent address in Romania are registered at their last permanent address. It is very important to note that there is a difference in definition between the:

- legal population of Romania – the totality of citizens whether or not they reside in Romania, and the

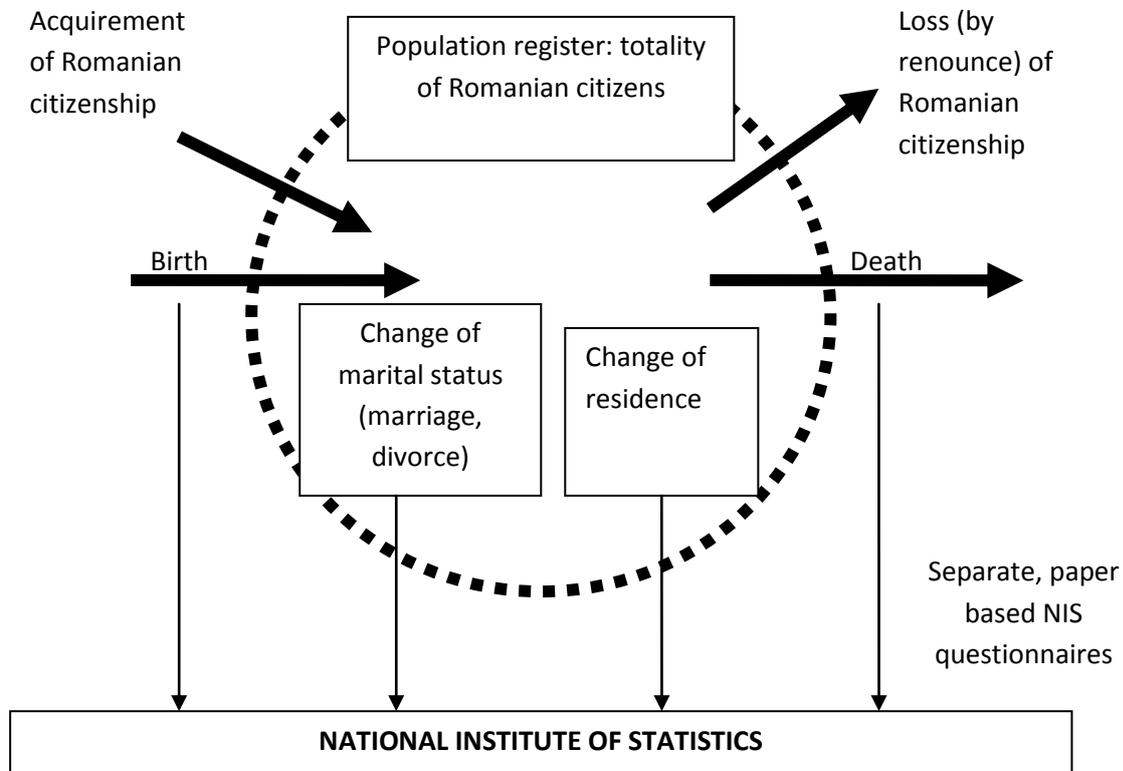
<sup>3</sup> The website of this institute: <http://depabd.mai.gov.ro/>.

- *usual population of Romania* - which, in accordance with United Nations recommendations, is the totality of persons residing usually in Romania irrespectively of their citizenship).

Based on this register, one can estimate the emigrant stock of Romanian citizens. However, this estimation will contain only the number of those who emigrated in agreement with the Romanian authorities, in other words, those who deregistered when leaving the country.

The MIA does not transfer data regarding the population stock to the National Institute of Statistics (NIS) (*Institutul Național de Statistică*). Although calculations on population stock (stable population) realized by NIS are performed independently from the population register, statistics on demographic events (vital statistics and migration statistics) are closely related to the functioning of the offices handling the population register.

## 1. Demographic events surveyed by the National Institute of Statistics through paper-based questionnaires



The registration of newborns, deaths, marriages, divorces is made by the NIS separately from the activity of the relevant organs functioning under the MIA, through paper-based questionnaires. Data collection on change of the residence and emigration is based on questionnaires designed by the NIS and the MIA and transformed through a computerized interface (a different one from the population register). The Directorate for Persons' Record and Database Management does not transfer directly data from the population register to the NIS. The NIS has its own system of data collections and the statisticians are not involved in the design of data collection made by the Directorate of Persons' Record and Database Management.

The population register is defined as the totality of Romanian citizens. As a consequence, one can enter the register by birth or by the acquisition of Romanian citizenship and one can be deregistered by death or by the loss (in practice by renouncement) of Romanian citizenship. However, Romania allows dual (or multiple) citizenship, consequently, emigration (even if in agreement with Romanian authorities) does not infer deregistration. Furthermore, it is not reported to the NIS when new a Romanian citizen is introduced into the population register.

The population register supplies first of all personal data required by the authorities (police etc.). According to our previous experiences, the population register is virtually inaccessible for scientific purposes (at least for RIRNM). The sole publicly available and statistically useable form of appearance of the population register is the *electoral list*. This consists of all adult Romanian citizens who have

the right to vote. This means that voter turnout is calculated with reference to legal (and not usually resident or stable) population.<sup>4</sup>

According to the electoral statistics, the number of persons entitled to vote at the parliamentary elections after 1989 was the following:

## 2. Number of persons entitled to vote according to electoral lists (and to population registers)

Parliamentary election	Official number of voters
1990	17 200 720
1992	16 380 663
1996	17 218 654
2000	17 699 727
2004	18 449 676
2008	18 464 274
2012	18 423 066

Source: Central Bureau for Elections (Biroul Electoral Central)

### 2.1.2. The registers of foreigners

Foreign citizens residing in Romania are registered separately from Romanian citizens. These registers are held by another department of the MIA, The General Inspectorate for Immigration (GII) (*Inspectoratul General pentru Imigrări*).<sup>5</sup> The GII was set up through the reorganization of the Romanian Office for Immigration in 2007 and its main task is to implement Romania's policies in the fields of migration, asylum, and aliens' integration. The GII is divided into functional departments. At territorial level it has its regional centers for accommodation and procedures for asylum seekers, accommodation centers for aliens under public custody, with their respective county departments. The GII functions based on Law no. 118/2012 and the Government Emergency Ordinance no. 18/2012.

#### 2.1.2.1. The register of short-stay visa applicants

The first register of foreign citizens is that of short-stay visa owners. Short term visa is issued only for nationals of some non-EU and non European Economic Area (EEA) countries. EU and EEA citizens staying for a short period of time (less than 3 months) in Romania are not registered anymore by Romanian authorities. Short-stay visa allows the citizens of third-countries to enter in Romania and to stay for a duration that does not exceed 90 days within 6 months that starts at the day of the first entry. Short –stay visa owners are not considered immigrants by Romanian authorities. The number

<sup>4</sup> See the communiqué of the NIS on the request of the Constitutional Court, <http://www.insse.ro/cms/files/diferente%20INS%20vs%20DEPABD%20.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> The website of the Inspectorate: <http://ori.mai.gov.ro>.

of visa applicants is not reported to NIS, but it is published in the MIA's own publication.<sup>6</sup> The main aim of the data collection, however, is not statistical, but administrative: the Romanian authorities want to control the cross-border movement of third-country citizens. The short-stay visa, which entitles its owner to stay in Romania for a limited period of time, cannot be extended. If the owner wishes to stay for a longer period of time in Romania, he/she must obtain a long-stay visa and afterwards a residence permit.

### **2.1.2.2. The registers of EU/EEA/Swiss Confederation citizens and of third-country nationals residing in Romania**

Foreign citizens have to register themselves as long term residents in Romania if they stay in Romania for more than 3 months. If they meet this obligation, they will enter the register of foreigners/immigrants. Since the 29<sup>th</sup> of December, 2006, citizens of EU, EEA countries and the Swiss Confederation are registered separately from third-country citizens. With both of the registers, the main aim of data collection regarding foreigners is administrative: the Romanian state is concerned to register each person who enters its territory for a long period of time. The MIA does not transfer data directly from these registers to the NIS, but it has its own annual publication on stock and flow of immigrants.<sup>7</sup> There is a difference made between foreigners as long term residents and foreigners as permanent residents. EU/EEA/Swiss Confederation citizens can apply for permanent resident status after 5 years, whereas third-country nationals after 10 years of continuous residence in Romania.

The register contains less information regarding EU, EEA and Swiss citizens compared to third-country nationals. In the first case the following data are registered:

- the name (first name and last name)
- the parents' names
- the place and date of birth
- the state of origin (citizenship)
- sex
- marital status
- the Romanian address,
- and the identification information regarding the passport or ID card.

In the case of third-country citizens additionally are registered:

- the educational attainment
- profession
- occupation<sup>8</sup>
- data regarding family members residing in Romania (date and place of birth, kinship relation, occupation and workplace, residence)

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<sup>6</sup> *Statistical Bulletin on Immigration and Asylum (Buletin statistic în domeniul imigrației și azilului).*

See the issue for the first semester from 2012 here:

<http://ori.mai.gov.ro/api/media/userfiles/analiza%20statistica%20sem%20I.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> See the footnote above.

<sup>8</sup> Occupation refers to the usual work or business through which someone makes a living. Profession refers to a vocation that requires formal education and training in a certain field of expertise. Not all occupations qualify for a profession, and one's occupation can differ from his/her profession.

- data regarding first grade relatives residing abroad (with the same items)

To sum up, the registers contain data of foreign citizens who reside for more than three months in Romania. As mentioned already, EU/EEA/Swiss citizens are registered separately from third-country citizens, likewise long term residents from permanent residents, respectively. Foreigners whose residence permit expires are automatically deregistered. Asylum seekers enter into the register of foreigners if their application was accepted. Foreigners under public custody do not enter into the register. Based on these registers, the Ministry of Internal Affairs performs its own estimations on the flow and stock of immigrants.

### ***2.1.2.3. The register of asylum seekers and persons who were granted protection in Romania***

Within the General Inspectorate for Immigration there is a special department responsible for issues of asylum and the integration of aliens into the Romanian society. The Directorate for Asylum and Integration (DAI) (*Direcția Azil și Integrare*) holds a register of asylum seekers and persons who were granted a form of protection in Romania. The main aim of the data collection is twofold, that is, of administrative and humanitarian nature: to identify the asylum seekers and to solve their asylum application. The procedure of solving the asylum applications (including the registration of applicants) is regulated, on the one hand, by the Dublin procedure (EU level). On the other hand, on national level it is regulated through the Law no. 122/2006 on asylum in Romania.

After the registration of their application, asylum seekers have to complete a questionnaire. This questionnaire was designed by the MIA (without consulting the NIS). The questionnaire contains information about the applicant's personal data (name, date of birth, place of birth, name of his/her parents, country of origin, educational attainment, occupation, marital status), data regarding the family of the applicant, the route travelled from the country of origin to Romania, data regarding previous asylum applications in EU member states or non EU countries, data regarding identity documents owned by the applicant. The questionnaire is filled out by the applicant in the presence of a DAI deputy and a translator. The questionnaire contributes with information for the evaluation of the asylum application. DAI does not transfer data on asylum applicants to NIS or other institutions. After the evaluation of the application, the resolution is registered: application refused or accepted, that is, granting a form of protection. In Romania, there are three forms of alien's protection: (1) the refugee status, (2) subsidiary protection, (3) temporary protection.

### ***2.1.3. The register of applications for reacquiring the Romanian citizenship***

Romania offers citizenship through preferential treatment for ethnic Romanians living in the lost territories of the interwar Greater Romania.<sup>9</sup> The applications for the reacquisition of the Romanian citizenship are treated separately from other citizenship applications. The National Agency for Citizenship (NAC) (*Agencia Națională pentru Cetățenie*) is responsible for the registration and solution of citizenship applications. Regarding the reacquisition of Romanian citizenship, the following amendments are of key importance (see Panaite coord. 2012: 5):

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<sup>9</sup> See Iordachi (2012)

- In 1991, the Law on Romanian Citizenship was created, which stipulated the right of former citizens and their descendants living in the territories annexed by the Soviet Union (and Bulgaria) to reacquire the Romanian citizenship, without renouncing to their foreign citizenship.
- The Law no. 192/1999 abolished repatriation as a way of reacquiring Romanian citizenship and transformed the requirement into a simplified/preferential procedure of naturalization, yet increased the number of conditions imposed for naturalization. The main criteria are the continuous residence for 7 years and the knowledge of the Romanian language, respectively.
- In 2007, the Government Emergency Ordinance no. 87/2007 reorganized the Commission for Citizenship into a single legal personality under the coordination of the Ministry of Justice.
- In 2010, the Government Emergency Ordinance no. 5/2010 established the NAC, which currently holds the register of applications for reacquisition of Romanian citizenship. The same GEO no. 5/2010 stipulates the procedure for the reacquisition of citizenship, and enlists the required documents. It also regulates the application form, which has to be filled out by the applicants. This application form (and the register of applications) contains the following information:
  - the name, birthplace and date of birth of the applicant
  - the permanent residence of the applicant
  - educational attainment, occupation and workplace
  - (if there is the case) the names of minors, to whom the applicant would like to reacquire Romanian citizenship.

It is important to mention that a single file can contain the application of more than one person, so one solved file can mean more than one new Romanian citizen. The NAC does not publish or transfer data on the number of applications or new citizens.

Another institution involved in the procedure of reacquiring Romanian citizenship is the Public Services for Persons' Record of Bucharest, District 1 (*Direcția Generală de Evidență a Persoanelor a Municipiului București, Sector 1*), and other Public Services for Persons' Record. These institutions are responsible for issuing Romanian ID cards for new citizens. New citizens without a residence in Romania have to contact the above mentioned Public Service from Bucharest, District 1. Simultaneously with issuing the identity card, new citizens are integrated into the system of population register already discussed. Theoretically, the MIA has data on the stock of citizens who never had a residence in Romania. However, data have not been published yet and are not transferred to the NIS.

## **2.2. Statistical data sources, sample surveys**

### ***2.2.1. Exhaustive survey on immigration and emigration flow***

Parallel with the registration of immigrants and deregistration of emigrants, an exhaustive survey on immigration and emigration flow is carried out. By this survey, data are collected for statistical purposes. (1) Official figures on immigration and emigration delivered by the NIS are based on this survey. (2) NIS uses figures on immigration and emigration flow as input variable when calculating the annual stock of usual resident population. The annual data on population stock will be discussed in the next subchapter.

The exhaustive character of the survey means that the questionnaire is filled out with each immigrant and emigrant under consideration. The data collection is designed according to EC

Regulation no. 862/2007 of the EP and EC. The national level legal framework consists of the Government Emergency Ordinance no. 30/2006, the Government Emergency Ordinance no. 102/2002 and the Law no. 248/1996.

The responsible for data collection is the MIA, the GII (in the case of immigrants) and the Directorate for Persons` Record and Database Management (in the case of emigrants), respectively. The data collection is made through a computerized interface designed by the MIA. This is not similar with exhaustive surveys on newborns, deaths, divorces and marriages, where paper-based questionnaires are used.

The questionnaires for immigrants and emigrants were projected by the NIS. Data are transmitted by the MIA to the NIS twice a year. The NIS questionnaires contain a relatively high number of questions. The Institute of Statistics collects information on:

- country of destination (or origin)
- nationality (ethnic background of the migrant)
- educational attainment and occupation
- marital status
- (former) permanent address/locality of departure

Data are publicly available (though not free) at Tempo-online for the 1990-2011 period as annual data on immigration and emigration flow. Frequencies for the country of destination, nationality, age groups, county and locality of departure are downloadable both for immigrants and emigrants. Data are transmitted to Eurostat too.

Emigrants are defined as Romanian citizens who leave the country in agreement with Romanian authorities, in order to settle abroad. The main problem (in what concerns reliability) is with the first part of this definition. The majority of effective out-migrants have little interest to declare the act of settling abroad to Romanian local authorities. Now, contrarily to the Communist era, the Romanian state (and the sending countries in general) has no effective control over the process of migration and, as a consequence, has no reliable statistics on out-migration. This is well illustrated by a comparison of Romanian emigration statistics with the immigration statistics of the main receiving countries of the Romanian migration (see Annex 1.) As we can see, in our reference period, the Romanian emigration statistics captured less than 10 percent of the legal outflows from Romania, under circumstances when according to World Bank the stock of emigrants of Romanian origin (in 2010) was around 2.8 million. (Alexe *et alii* 2012)

Further (reliability) problems are generated by the definition of the term *immigrants*. Immigrants are defined as foreign citizens who come in Romania in agreement with Romanian authorities to settle their residence in the country. The complications here are due to the specification that immigrants are foreign citizens. As it was already mentioned, after 1990, Romanian authorities offered through a preferential procedure Romanian citizenship for ethnic Romanians residing in neighboring countries, primarily for Romanians from the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine. Ethnic Romanians could obtain Romanian citizenship even without having Romanian residence. If an ethnic Romanian from Moldova or Ukraine, who formerly obtained Romanian citizenship sets his/her residence in Romania, he/she will not appear in migration statistics. So, it seems founded to claim that the majority of effective in-migrants does not appear in NIS statistics as immigrants.

## 2.2.2. NIS data on population stock

As we already mentioned, the number of persons included in the population register does not correspond at all with the (official) numbers concerning the Romanian population delivered by NIS. The population register contains the so called *legal population* of the country, while the NIS figures refer to the country's *usual population*.

Annual stock data on Romanian population (delivered as official figures) are calculated by NIS based on last census results at the level of local administrative units (LAU 2 – communes, towns) according to the next formula:

$$SP_{(t)} = SP_{(t-1)} + n - d + e - i,$$

where  $SP_{(t)}$  is the stable population of Romania on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January of the given inter-census year;  $SP_{(t-1)}$  is the stable population on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January of the preceding year;  $n$  is the number of live-born children;  $d$  is the number of deaths,  $e$  is the number of emigrants;  $i$  is the number of immigrants.

As we already mentioned, the registration of demographic events (live-borns, deaths, immigrants, emigrants) is strictly related to administrative procedures, although rests on separate, paper-based questionnaires elaborated by NIS.

The stable population differs from the legal population of the population registers, as the former includes the foreigners residing in Romania, but excludes Romanian citizens residing abroad, while the latter is defined as the totality of Romanian citizens. The NIS does not make separate calculations on Romanian citizens and foreigners. Due to these differences, there are constant differences in the size of the adult population appearing in the two sources under inquiry.

### 3. Number of persons entitled to vote according to electoral lists (and to the population registers) at the time of parliamentary elections and the number of adult population according to NIS calculations

Parliamentary election	Official number of voters	Adult population according to NIS	Difference
1990	17 200 720	16 576 328	624 392
1992	16 380 663	16 415 313	-34 650
1996	17 218 654	16 933 214	285 440
2000	17 699 727	17 347 395	352 332
2004	18 449 676	17 088 071	1 361 605
2008	18 464 274	17 449 417	1 014 857
2012	18 423 066	17 475 017	948 049

Source: Central Bureau for Elections; NIS

The difference in definitions creates further inconsistencies at the level of administrative units. The stable population of a local administrative unit (1) excludes those who have permanent residence in the concerned locality, but have temporary residence in another locality; (2) and includes those who have permanent residence in another locality, but temporarily reside in the concerned locality. To remind, in the population register (Romanian) citizens are registered according to their official permanent residence.

These LAU2 level calculations relying on cohort component method provide the reference population for most of the demographic and human development indices published by NIS. Due to the fact that NIS does not effectuate separate calculations on Romanian nationals and foreigners, separate human development or demographic indices on foreign nationals do not exist.

Another problem highly relevant from the point of view of data reliability is that NIS uses administrative sources for emigration and immigration (the above mentioned exhaustive survey carried out in collaboration with the MIA). These sources cover a very tiny segment of the entire phenomenon of migration, especially in the case of emigration. This means that both the population register and the NIS highly overestimate the stable population of the country. This problem will be discussed in details in the subchapter regarding census data.

### **2.2.3. Household Labour Force Surveys**

The Household Labour Force Survey (*Ancheta Forței de Muncă în Gospodărie – AMIGO*) plays a central role in the Romanian statistical data production system. Its main objective is to measure the shares of the active (employed and unemployed) and the inactive population, respectively.<sup>10</sup> As in other European states too, LFS is coordinated and carried out by the National Institute of Statistics. In the organization of the fieldwork, county level Statistical Institutes play a key role. Since in Romania there are no micro-censuses, LFS is the most important data source regarding the labor force for inter-census periods.

The first LFS (as pilot) was carried out in 1992, and then one annual LFS was organized in 1994 and another in 1995. Since 1996, LFS surveys are carried out in four waves each year, so it represents a continuous research.

The survey covers members of selected households with permanent domicile irrespectively of their citizenship. Thus, foreign nationals with permanent residence in Romania might enter the sample too. The persons who live temporarily (for less than 6 month) elsewhere (in Romania or abroad) are considered members of the household too, as well as persons who moved elsewhere for a longer period than 6 months, but maintain close relationships with the household (children studying elsewhere, students, household members working elsewhere, convicts and prisoners, military personnel etc.).

The survey is carried out on a stratified random sample of dwellings, and it is representative on national level. Only private households are included in the sample, so foreigners who live in common households (public custody etc.) are left out. The sample is representative both for the households and for the population.

The theoretical size of the sample is 112 300 dwellings per year. A dwelling may contain one or more households. All households and persons older than 15 years are included from the selected dwellings in the LFS.

The data are collected by identical questionnaires in all four waves of the survey. The questionnaire is divided into two parts: one is dedicated for the dwelling and households, while the other for the persons. The first part collects information regarding the dwelling (number of household etc.) There is a household table for each household containing the main demographic and social indicators of household members.

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<sup>10</sup> LFS methodological reports are available for the 2007-2011 surveys on the website of the National Institute of Statistics. The present description is based primarily on these reports. See:

<http://www.insse.ro/cms/ro/content/rapoarte-de-calitate-anchete-statistic>

The questionnaire concerning the persons is addressed for household members aged over 15 years. This part contains:

- general questions for all respondents
- questions addressed for persons who work: professional status, place of work, occupation, secondary activity, hours worked, willingness to change the job
- questions addressed to persons who do not work (unemployed and inactive) regarding their professional status, activity, occupation and place of work of their last job, willingness for a job, reasons for not seeking a job etc.;
- questions addressed to persons who are seeking a job (unemployed or employed who want to change their job), methods used for seeking a job, availability for work etc.

The main indicators based on the LFS are the following: the total employment and unemployment rate, the employment and unemployment rate by main demographic indicators (sex, age groups) and territorial units, youth unemployment, long term unemployment etc.

Just like the data collection, the publication of the results is performed on a quarterly basis. Data are usually collected in January, April, July and October. The publication of the results is performed six months after the fieldwork. Data are available on Tempo-online at national level and for certain indicators at NUTS 2 level. At NUTS 3 level (counties), however, there are no available data.

As it was already mentioned, foreigners with permanent residence in Romania are included in the survey too. For each household member there are questions (in the household table) regarding (1) the country of origin; (2) citizenship; (3) nationality. Nationality here means ethnic background and as alternatives the biggest ethnic groups from Romania (Romanian, Hungarian, Roma, German, other) are enlisted. In spite of the existence of questions regarding the immigrant status, data were not separately published for Romanian citizens and foreign nationals, or by country of origin. Micro-data are available upon request at NIS or at Eurostat. The problem is that in a European comparison the proportion of immigrants in Romania is extremely low (0.1 percent), so only several hundred of immigrants are included in LFS. This sample size is not big enough to an in-depth analysis of the foreigners' (or different foreigner groups') labor force status.

There is another possibility for migration-related secondary analyses. In the personal questionnaire of the LFS there is a question regarding the location of the unit where the concerned person works. One of the response options is that the workplace is situated abroad. In this case, the country of the workplace is registered. Due to the fact that temporarily absent household members are included into the survey, LFS could be a valuable data source regarding short term labor force emigration. However, data on this issue have not been published yet.

In 2008 (following the initiative of the Eurostat), an ad-hoc module was introduced into the LFS in all European countries. The ad-hoc module aimed to investigate the labor-force situation of the immigrants and their immediate descendants. The main aim of the 2008 ad-hoc module was to provide better identification of immigrants and their immediate descendants, and to receive a dataset which allows for more flexibility in the analysis and provides comparable data on the migrants' labor-market situation.<sup>11</sup>

However, in some participant countries there were not included all ad-hoc module questions in the LFS questionnaire. In countries where the number of immigrants was relatively low (among them Romania too), a so-called "light module" was introduced. This contains only four additional questions: the year of citizenship acquisition, the country of birth of the father; the country of birth of the mother and the total number of years of residence in the host country. However, because of

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<sup>11</sup> See in details Ramb (2008).

the low proportion of immigrants it is problematic to analyze the labor force status of immigrants along these variables.

As Romania is first of all an emigration country, for the purposes of analyzing the Romanian migration, not only the Romanian LFS can be interesting, but the LFS performed in the main receiving countries too. For instance, in Italy or in Spain a considerable part of the work-force is constituted by Romanians. These surveys are of special interest because the Romanian LFS do not contain any specific questions regarding migration (e.g. Have you ever worked abroad? Do you plan to work abroad?).

#### **2.2.4. “Community censuses”**

In Romania, there is a particular but relatively widely used form of empirical data collection, the so-called “community census”. Community censuses are surveys carried out at the level of local authorities. The first community census on (temporal)<sup>12</sup> emigrants was realized precisely in the first year of our reference period (2001). The project was financed by the International Organization for Migration and coordinated by Dumitru Sandu. Based on the results of this survey, Sandu (2002; 2005) elaborated an interpretation of the migration process of the 1990’s, which proved to be one of the most influential models on Romanian migration up to these days.

The questionnaires were transmitted by post to the local (communal) police offices, as the researchers cooperated with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Then questionnaires were forwarded to the local administrative units, which numbered 2686 at the time of the survey. In Romania, the lowest level of territorial administrative unit is represented by the communes (and towns). Usually (but not necessarily) a commune is composed by more villages. The number of villages was 12 700 at the time. The questionnaire referred to these 12 700 villages and, in addition, to 152 towns having under 20 thousand inhabitants. This implies that although the questionnaires were posted to communes, the settlements were registered separately. Due to the collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the non-response rate was extremely low. Altogether from 2661 communes (12357 villages) and 148 towns were returned interpretable questionnaires, thus the investigation can be regarded as exhaustive (for settlements under 20 thousand inhabitants). One can question, however, the validity of the investigation, at least in what concerns some of its aspects. One of the problems stems from the fact that the questionnaires were filled by so called “key-informers”, who in a proportion of 60 percent were employees of the mayor’s office, but one can find among them teachers and other representatives of the local intelligentsia. Therefore, it is hard to evaluate, for instance, how the different social strata are weighted in their “mental social map”.<sup>13</sup> In spite of these problems, and taking into consideration the rigorous and well documented character of the survey, the investigation can be considered more informative than a simple personal survey.

At the level of settlement, the questionnaire asked about:

- The number of households that, after 1989, had or have at least one person departed abroad, out of which households
  - o With car
  - o With newly built house

<sup>12</sup> The survey did not define exactly “temporal migration”. In fact, all Romanian citizens working abroad were considered temporal migrants. (Sandu 2002; 2005)

<sup>13</sup> The respondents could report their own estimations, as local statistics on emigration did not exist.

- Private business.
- The number of persons who are currently departed and had left after 1989, whether or not they have their permanent residence abroad, registered by
  - sex
  - age (under 30, 30+)
  - religion (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Neo-Protestant)
  - ethnicity (Romanian, Hungarian, German, Roma, others)
  - country of destination
  - field of occupation (construction, household services, agriculture, qualified worker, hotels/bars, departed for studies, other)
- The number of persons who lived abroad after 1989, but currently are present in the locality
  - sex
  - age (under 30, 30+)
  - religion (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Protestant, Neo-protestant)
  - ethnicity (Romanian, Hungarian, German, Roma, others)
  - Country of destination
  - Field of occupation (construction, household services, agriculture, qualified worker, hotels/bars, departed for studies, other)

The results of the survey were first published in 2002, at the same time with the 2002 census results. According to the 2002 census, the number of the stable population in Romania was 21,67 million, which meant that the country's population dropped with almost 1.1 million in the 1992-2002 census period. Although demographers had forecasted that the number of the population was going to fall (Ghețău 1996), the extent of the decrease was shocking not only for the Romanian wider public but for the scientific community too. Only slightly more than a quarter of the population loss was caused by negative natural growth, and only one third was foreseen by official NIS calculations. Sandu published his results in this context, and introduced the notion of "circular migration". According to his interpretation, the unregistered and unforeseen population loss should not have been considered as being caused by definitive out-migration. In his interpretation, the majority of missing persons was only temporarily abroad and might have returned to Romania.

Since the community census of migrants coordinated by Dumitru Sandu, many similar surveys have been carried out,<sup>14</sup> but none of them displayed the methodological rigor or the scientific impact of the first one.

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<sup>14</sup>The *Inclusion 2007* (see Fleck-Rughinis 2008) and *Models of Ethnic Segregation 2008* (see ISPMN 2009) surveys focused primarily on Roma population, whereas the *Access to Structural Funds of Local Administration* (see Toth-Dărășteanu-Tarnovschi coord. 2009) on access of local communities to European funds. All these surveys contained questions regarding the number of persons living (temporarily) abroad.

#### **2.2.4. “Living abroad on a temporary basis” (2006)**

An important (partially) survey-based research on Romanian out-migration was financed by the Romanian branch of the Soros Foundation. The research project was entitled *Living abroad on a temporarily basis. The economic migration of Romanians: 1990-2006*. The research team composed mainly by PhD candidates in sociology at the University of Bucharest was coordinated by Dumitru Sandu again. The fieldwork for the surveys was carried out in August 2006. Not only the research report, but also the research instruments (questionnaires) and SPSS data bases are accessible on the site of the Romanian Open Society Institute.<sup>15</sup>

The research had a complex design. At the first level, a national survey was conducted with 1400 randomly selected respondents. Each respondent had to provide answers about him-/herself but also about his/her household members. This way, the researchers received information about 4791 persons. One of the results is that these 4791 household members left the country for working or living abroad in total for 548 times since 1990. So, besides the intentions of migration, the researchers could analyze even the number of departures.

The “departures” were not exactly defined from the perspective of the minimum length of the stay. They were categorized, however, into three major groups: (1) working, (2) cross-border commercial activity, (3) other. The main focus was on work-migration. Regarding this topic, the following questions were asked for each departure:

- the year and month of the departure (and eventual return)
- the receiving country
- the occupational status before and after departure
- if the person was helped by someone to find a job or in any other sense during the departure; the relationship to this person
- the way of finding the job
- the character of the employment (legal or illegal)

Besides questions concerning departures, a relatively long questionnaire was filled out with each respondent. It had the following sections: (1) satisfaction with living conditions, (2) household table, (3) questions for not work-related migration and cross-border commercial activity, respectively, (4) internal migration, (5) intentions of migration (migration potential), (5) the ideology of migration, (6) values and lifestyle, (7) values regarding family and childbearing, (8) incomes and expenditures (9) intentions to become an entrepreneur.

Besides the national sample, at the second level, two regional samples were elaborated each having the size of 400 respondents. However, the research targets here were specifically the households with work-related migration experience (at least one of the household members worked during the investigation or had worked abroad since 1990 for at least one month). The households were selected through a snowball sampling method with randomly selected starting points. The two regions were: the area of Focsani (the capital of Vrancea county) and the area of Alexandria (the capital of Teleorman county). The micro-region of Focsani was characterized by an intensive out-migration towards Italy, whereas the region of Alexandria by a less intensive but significant out-migration towards Spain. As a consequence, in this latter region the population had less experience of migration.

The regional surveys were preceded by a qualitative fieldwork in two villages from the investigated area. After the quantitative research, qualitative fieldworks were carried out in destination countries

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.soros.ro/ro/fisier\\_acord\\_articole.php?document=693](http://www.soros.ro/ro/fisier_acord_articole.php?document=693)

too. In Rome and in Madrid, respectively, interviews were conducted with migrants originating from the micro-regions concerned; the subjects were selected with a snowball-sample. Contact information about migrants were collected during the quantitative surveys carried out in the two micro-regions. The main aim of the quantitative phase was to investigate in-depth the strategies and network of the migrants.

There was a third region too included into the project, the Serbian-Romanian border area of Orșova along the Danube, where only a qualitative fieldwork was carried out. Here the phenomenon of cross-border migration was studied.

### **2.2.5. Surveying Romanian Migrants in Italy**

In 2011, a survey was organized among Romanian migrants residing in Italy as part of the project *Temporary Migration, Integration and the Role of Policies (TEMPO)*, funded by the NORFACE Research Program: *Migration in Europe – Social, Economic, Cultural and Policy Dynamics*. The survey was performed by ISMU, Milano.<sup>16</sup> (See Mara 2012)

The survey was conducted between January and March 2011 on a sample of 1000 individuals. The research focused on migrants who arrived in Italy between 2004–2006, and in the 2007–2010 time period, respectively. The sampling method was based on quota and snowball methods. The quotas of the interviewees (region, sex and age) were defined based on the statistics of the Italian National Statistics Office on Romanian migrants. Based on these data, 208 interviews were taken in Milan, 370 in Turin and 418 in Rome. In the second phase, the interviewees went to the aggregation centers frequently visited by Romanian migrants, and selected there the respondents randomly. In the third phase, a snowball sample was used.

The main aim of the survey was to examine the impact of the free visa regime and Romania's EU accession on the migration plans of Romanians arrived to Italy. These macro-political events do not have a direct effect, but influence the migration plans through their implications for employment and access of Romanians to the Italian welfare system. The changes in these conditions could modify the intentions of migrants regarding the length of staying in Italy.

The questionnaire contained questions regarding the following topics (Mara 2012: 2, 126-131):

- Socio-demographic indicators of the Romanian migrants (age, gender, marital status, number of children, family composition, residency in the host country, areas of origin, potential migration of family members etc.)
- Migration history (how many times did the migrant live in Italy, if he/she lived in a third country, when he/she arrived to Italy etc.)
- Labor market position (previous and current occupation, employment status, occupational switch from the country of origin to the host country, qualification level, satisfaction with the current occupation, level of earnings)
- Remittances (frequency, amount, share of savings or earnings, motive, recipients, means of delivery etc.)
- Access to the Italian welfare system
- Current and previous (at the arrival) migration plans
- Self-assessment concerning the migration experience, potential positive or negative outcomes

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<sup>16</sup> No Romanian researchers were involved.

The survey is important because empirically investigates the migration intentions of Romanians from Italy. As we could see, the previous researches considered the migration of Romanians as being temporary or circulatory without substantiating these claims by serious empirical evidence. According to the results of the survey presented here, the majority of Romanian migrants in Italy do not have well defined migration plans. The majority of those who claimed to have well defined plans expressed a preference for permanent migration (remaining permanently in Italy), whereas the short-term migration (that is, returning to Romania) was the less popular option held by them. Romania's EU accession proved to considerably modify the migration plans of the Romanian migrants. The stable employment situation and access to welfare facilities also encourage the longer term and permanent staying.

### 2.3. Census databases

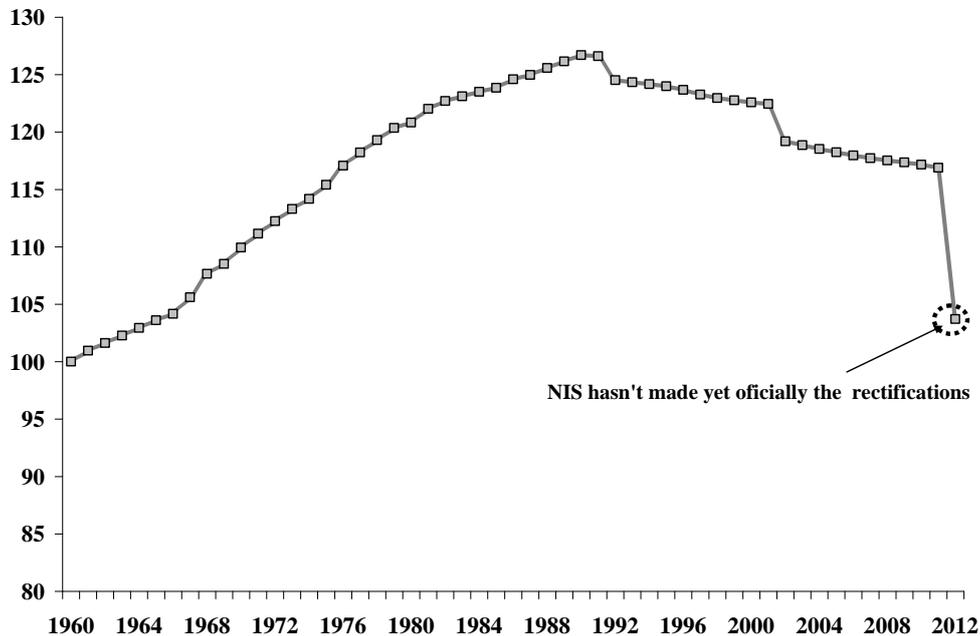
After the political regime change, the National Institute of Statistics has conducted three traditional censuses. The reference dates of these are included in the following table:

#### 4. The reference date of censuses and the stable population according to them

		1992	2002	2011
Reference date		6 <sup>th</sup> of January, 1992	18 <sup>th</sup> of March, 2002	20 <sup>th</sup> of October, 2011
Stable population		22 810 035	21 680 974	19 042 936
Previous annual NIS forecast on population stock		23 192 274	22 430 457	21 413 815
Difference	Number	382 239	596 974	2 413 815
	%	<b>1,7</b>	<b>2,8</b>	<b>12,7</b>

One can immediately observe that NIS annual data on population systematically overestimate the country's population (primarily because of the under-registration of out-migration), and that the extent of this overestimation has considerably increased over time (what is due to the intensification of out-migration of the Romanians). Comparing the census figures and the NIS annual data on population stock results that NIS overestimated the population: with 1.7 percent in 1992, with 2.8 percent in 2002, and with 12.7 percent in 2011. Now, taking into account the later severe overestimation, one can conclude that none of the human development and demographic indicators delivered by NIS can be considered reliable.

## 5. The change of population size in Romania compared to 1960 (1960=100%)



Furthermore, another main problem is represented by the fact that the final results of the 2011 census have not been published yet. Preliminary results published in February and in August 2012 were not based on micro-data (introduced household and personal questionnaires) but on cumulative tables (*centralizator*) filled out by census enumerators and forwarded to NIS. The NIS anticipates that the final results will be published in July 2013.

The following *cumulative tables* were used by enumerators in the 2011 census:

- Number of registered persons grouped in the following categories:
  - Persons present at the reference moment of the census
  - Persons temporarily absent (for a period less of than 12 months)
  - Persons temporarily present
  - Persons away for a long period of time (for a period of at least 12 months)

The data on the above mentioned categories is further detailed according to sex and citizenship (Romanian nationals, foreigners)

- Persons residing abroad from each category.
- Enlisted persons by
  - Ethnicity
  - Mother tongue
  - Religion

The NIS communiqués concerning the 2011 census were based on these cumulative tables. As there are no data concerning age, we do not have census data regarding the age structure of the Romanian population. As the younger cohorts were mostly affected by the out-migration, in the case of the

mostly affected 20-30 age group the unregistered deficit most probably exceeds 20 percent. (Ghețău 2012)

Besides the discrepancy of NIS calculations on annual population stock and the census results, another problem stems from the fact that the definition of the “Romanian population” has changed over time. The 1992 census defined the Romanian population as *the totality of Romanian citizens with legal residence in Romania, whether or not they live abroad for years*. One can note that this definition corresponds to the definition of “legal population” still used by population register. In the context of EU integration and international standardization of the Romanian statistical system, the 2002 and 2011 censuses changed the definition. In 2002, in accordance with the United Nations’ recommendations, the Romanian “usual population” was redefined as *the totality of residents in Romania whether or not they are Romanian nationals*. In other words, Romanian citizens who had left the country (for more than a year) were excluded, meanwhile foreign citizens and stateless persons who had been living for more than a year in Romania were registered. The problem is that Romania, under the pressure of European and international institutions, changed the census and statistical definition of its own population, but did not change the logic and the system of population registration and did not restructure and integrate the different registers. This implies, actually, that behind the Romanian system of registration and data production there is no coherently used definition of the population.

Nevertheless, changing the definition of the “stable population” had positive consequences too. First of all, due to the stretching of the concept in a way to cover foreign citizens too, the 2002 and 2011 censuses provide us (or will provide after the publication of the results) relatively rich data on immigrants.

In the case of (1) foreign born and (2) foreign citizens who had arrived in Romania for more than 12 months, the standard census questionnaire was used. All immigrants who arrived in Romania for more than 12 month were registered, including asylum seekers, persons and persons who were granted any form of protection in Romania. The questions regarding citizenship and place of birth see in the Annex 2.

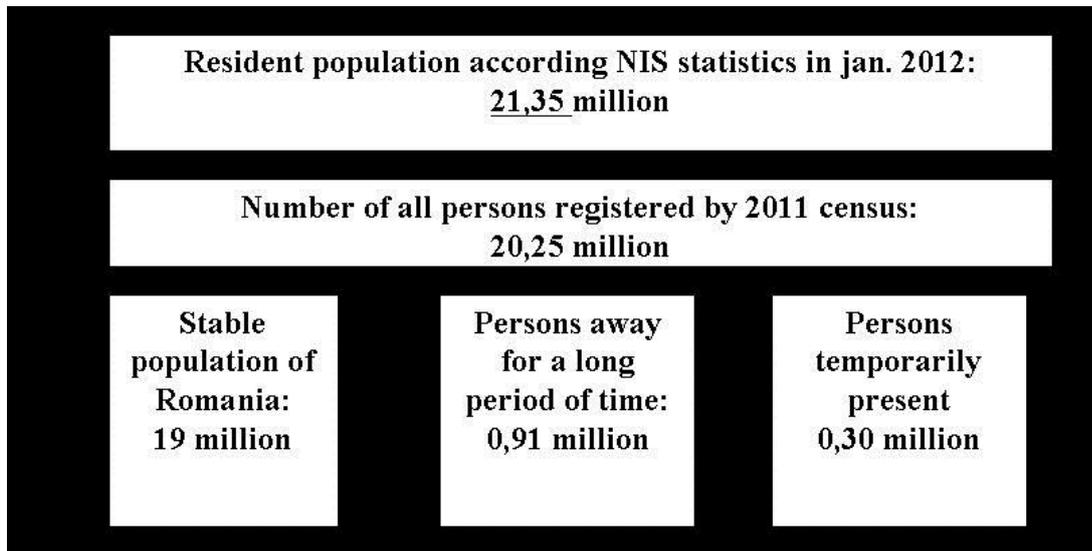
Standard personal census questionnaires provide information regarding a wide range of demographic and human development related issues:

- Main demographic indicators: sex, date of birth, legal and effective marital status, number of children ever born (in the case of women)

- Data on internal and international migration: situation of the person on the census-day, (if it is temporarily absent) the reason of absence, place of birth, previous residence, date of settling in Romania,
- Ethnic and cultural characteristics: religion, ethnicity, mother tongue
- Educational characteristics: the highest educational institution from which the person graduated, educational institution presently attended
- Economic characteristics: current economic stats, hours worked, occupation, workplace, location of workplace, sector in which the person works, form of social protection for unemployed persons,
- Difficulties in performing the current activity: vision difficulties, hearing difficulties, difficulty to walk and to climb the stairs, memory or concentration difficulties, self-care difficulties, communication difficulties

According to 2011 census, the usual population of Romania was 19 million. However, the census registered a total of 20,25 million people.

## 6. Different categories registered by the 2011 census



Besides the 19 million present and temporarily absent persons there were counted 0,91 million persons who had been away for a long period of time (at least 1 year). At the reference moment of the census, 728 thousand of them were abroad. Furthermore, 386 thousand persons out of the group of temporarily absentees were abroad too. Preliminary data on these categories are available at the level of towns and communes.

## 7. Different categories registered by the 2011 census

	Total	Being abroad at the reference moment of the census	
Present	18 384 778		
Temporarily absent	658 989	386 592	58,7%
Away for a long period of time	910 425	728 494	80,0%
Temporarily present	302 286		
<b>Total</b>	<b>20 256 478</b>	<b>1 115 086</b>	<b>5,5%</b>

A special questionnaire was elaborated for persons living abroad (for a long period of time or just temporarily). This type of census questionnaire was used for the first time. These questionnaires were completed by a present household member or in their absence (if it was possible) by neighbors. It is highly possible that in many cases household members registered the emigrant persons as if she/he had been present. This means that the number of persons away for a long period of time is underestimated, while the number of usual population is overestimated. The questions in the questionnaire concerning persons away for a long period of time were the following:

- The country where the person lives
- When did the person leave the locality of enumeration to go abroad?
- Does the person living abroad work there?

- The field the person works in (agriculture, industry, construction, restaurants, hotel, transport, computers/informatics, household services, healthcare, other fields)
- Does the person send money to household members?
- How often does the person living abroad send money to the household members? (on monthly basis, every 3 months, every 6 months, yearly, occasionally)

Besides the special questionnaire for persons living abroad, if the person in question has been absent only temporarily, a standard personal questionnaire had to be filled out. If the person has been away for a long time period, a further special questionnaire was required to be filled out (in addition to that administered for persons living abroad).

This latter questionnaire (which referred both to persons temporarily absent and to those away for a long period of time) provides data on the:

- educational attainment,
- legal marital status,
- ethnicity, and
- citizenship of the migrant.

Another special questionnaire had to be filled out in the case of persons temporarily present (for less than 12 months). This questionnaire contained only few data:

- the permanent residence of the person
- the citizenship
- the date of arrival
- and the reason for arrival.

The third (and last) issue to note is that by using census figures we can calculate net migration for inter-census periods. According to official migration statistics delivered by the NIS, in the time period between 2001 and 2009, the most severe population loss caused by migration occurred in 2004, when a 0.5 per thousand negative net migration was registered. However, in 2007 and 2008, NIS registered positive figures on net migration. The natural growth of the Romanian population in the 2002-2011 inter-census period was -416 146, which equates to an average of -1.9 per thousand annual growth rate. This means that the 2011 census highlighted a 2.22 million loss caused by net migration (10.3 percent of the 2002 population). According to these calculations, the average annual net migration in the inter-census period was -11.4 per thousand. This figure is certainly much more consistent with the immigration statistics of receiving countries, although probably still underestimates the outflows. The official net migration and the result of calculations based on census figures see in the Annex 3.

### **3. CASE STUDIES ABOUT THE USAGE AND ACCESSIBILITY OF MIGRATION-RELATED DATA SOURCES ON LOCAL LEVEL**

#### **3.1. Harghita County Council**

Our case study discusses the migration-related databases and researches concerning Harghita county. The reference period of the case study is the time period between 2001 and 2011. As an introduction we should mention that Harghita county has some specific features with regard to migration processes.

The county is part of Szeklerland, which is not a distinct administrative unit, but a socio-historical and ethnographic region, populated mainly by Hungarian-speakers. One of the main features of the region is that it is a rural periphery that has always been a labor force sending area. The temporary and definitive labor force migration has been a widely accepted social practice, present in the life strategies of many families. Labor force migration had particularly an important role. Between the years 1920 and 1990 the labor force migration from the Szeklerland was primarily internal. After the change of the regime an intensive international migration has started, primarily toward Hungary. In the 1990s, Harghita was among the counties with the highest rates of emigration and the highest proportion of those working abroad, respectively. However, after Romania's EU integration, the emigration rate (compared to other regions) has become relatively low. In what follows, we will describe the available data regarding migration in two separate subchapters. First, we will discuss the data production of official institutions, and then the survey and qualitative researches which were focused (integrally or partially) on our county.

### **3.1.1. Data gathered by official institutions**

The NIS has a local branch in Harghita county, the Harghita County Statistical Office (*Direcția Județeană de Statistică Harghita*). The administrative structure and the data production of this subunit are determined exclusively by the central headquarters. The Harghita County Statistical Office has its own annual publication, the Statistical Yearbook of Harghita County (*Anuarul Statistic al județului Harghita*). The Statistical Yearbooks have a standardized format and content for each county. They contain only data, without any comments or analysis. Regarding international migration annual flow data are published on the number of emigrants and immigrants. Data on emigration flow are available by the locality of the departure, whereas data on immigration flow by the locality of destination. The Statistical Yearbook of Harghita County is not available in digital version, nevertheless, these data can be found on Tempo Online (although not for free).

On the website of the NIS one can find the Monthly Statistical Bulletin (*Buletin Statistic Lunar*).<sup>17</sup> Monthly data are available since January 2007 in the form of tables covering five-pages per county. When accessing these files on the website of the local NIS webpage,<sup>18</sup> we are navigated to the website of the NIS, so this is not a service provided by the county institution. The monthly reports do not contain information concerning international migration.

Some county-related statistical information can be read on the local website but these only apply to migration within the borders of the country. This website offers only one type of service (with reference to the Law no. 544/2001 on the publicity of data): an application form for requesting information can be downloaded. There is no information though with regard to what types of information can be requested by this form.

To sum up, the Harghita County Statistical Office performs data-gathering according to national regulations, and a small proportion of this data is made available for the wider public. The Harghita County Statistical Office does not do data-gathering and processing only for county-related data.

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.insse.ro/cms/ro/content/arhiva-buletin-statistic-lunar-judetean>

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.harghita.insse.ro/main.php?id=422>

### **3.1.2. Surveys and qualitative (anthropological) researches**

In this chapter we describe separately the survey-based researches and the non-survey type researches, which investigate county level migration processes.

#### **3.1.2.1. Quantitative researches (surveys and statistical analyses)**

There are four types of statistical analyses and survey researches concerning international migration. The first type contains those analyses which refer to the entire country. These works are enlisted also in the country reports.<sup>19</sup> The second type of analyses contains those researches which deal with Transylvania or Hungarians from Transylvania, where Harghita county is included as well. These researches pay special attention to demography and emigration items. There is a special demographic projection elaborated on the demand of the Harghita County Council concerning the demographic future of the county. Among others, this study analyses emigration trends too (Csata–Kiss 2010). These studies contain data about Harghita county, but their selection and analysis needs further research.

The WAC-Center for Regional and Anthropological Research<sup>20</sup>, since the beginning of 2000, has been regularly conducting complex household surveys covering Szeklerland in geographical terms (2000, 2004, 2011, 2012). These analyses focus on the following topics:

- The financial situation of the families
- The family members' labor market situation
- Education and qualification
- Household equipments
- Plans on future
- Migration experiences and plans

The above-mentioned surveys do not focus only on migration but it is possible to connect the phenomenon of migration with financial situation, the labor market situation, family plans, social atmosphere/climate and other factors too. These analyses can be found in the database of WAC in the form of research reports.

#### **3.1.2.2. Qualitative researches**

Since the beginning of the 1990's, the working group of WAC – Centre for Regional and Anthropological Research has been continuously researching foreign labor force emigration. They analyzed the impact of emigration processes on communities of origin with qualitative methods. The studies are available on-line (or in the form of hard-copy publications).

These researches were undertaken in Harghita county, referring to the sending society and utilizing the methods of cultural anthropology. Researches undertaken by WAC are the following:

- The effects of the international labor migration on the sending region, that is Szeklerland, the destination country being Hungary, 1994-1995

<sup>19</sup> See: Alexe et al (2012); Ghețău (1996), (2007), (2012); Sandu (2002), (2005), (2010).

<sup>20</sup> A research institute from Miercurea Ciuc.

- Mobility and way of life. The effects of the labor migration on the way of life and identity in Szeklerland, 2005-2006
- Labor migration of young people, 2006-2007
- Transnational migration: research on communication, rituals and values in the process of transnational migration in Szeklerland, 2007-2008
- The international migration of women in Szeklerland, 2010-2011
- Changing the way of life in the context of labor migration: new dimensions of value system and consumption, 2011-2012
- Migration and development in Szeklerland, 2012-2013

### **3.1.3. Summary**

Particular county level databases concerning migration do not exist and county level data can be found only within national databases. Despite the fact that migration plays a crucial role in the inhabitants' lives, the national databases do not contain information regarding foreign labor migration. The (temporal and definitive) out-migration considerably influences the labor market in Harghita county, the social integration of youth, the regional modernizing processes and the children's socialization.

All information regarding out-migration would be very useful for designing a proper integrated development policy and sectoral development policies, respectively. The temporary or definitive emigration affects or already affected 1/3 of the families from Harghita county. The anthropological researches show that not only the scale is significant but also its effects on the sending society. It would be important to undertake a secondary research in order to collect and to analyze the statistical data and survey research concerning Harghita county. It would be also important to regularly monitor the effects of foreign labor in the following fields:

- Labor division among family members
- The effects on the financial situation of the family
- The effects on the children's socialization

## **3.2. Municipality of Sfântu Gheorghe**

Within the SEEMIG project (along with research institutions, universities, statistical offices and institutes) the local authorities also play a key part in researching and managing the effects of migration processes. The Sfântu Gheorghe Local Authority is one of the project partners. It is the capital city of Covasna county, (the "county" represents a NUTS3 unit). In the first decade after the regime change, Szeklerland (the region where Sfântu Gheorghe is situated too) had the highest emigration percentage in Romania. In what concerns the participation in the SEEMIG project, one of the main goals of the Sfântu Gheorghe Local Authority is to develop instruments and policies that will "keep" the younger generation home and will help them to use their knowledge and experience in their hometown, thus contributing to the town's development.

The phenomenon of emigration presents a decreasing tendency nowadays. Migration, as a general phenomenon is still present in Szeklerland, Covasna County and Sf. Gheorghe, but it has been decreasing in time. This observation is reinforced by the 2011 population census. According to preliminary census results, the population of Covasna county dropped with 7.3 percent during the time period between 2002 and 2011. Although this is a significant decrease, it is lower compared to the national average, which reached almost 13 percent. The population loss of Covasna county was similar to that of the other counties from the region, Harghita and Mureş.

There are many researches and studies treating the subject of migration in this country, but a middle or long term strategy has not been developed yet. This lack of a strategy is also present in the case of Sf. Gheorghe.

In Sf. Gheorghe, the young generation expresses an inclination to migration. The number of young university and college graduates who chose to stay home shows a constantly decreasing tendency. The majority of unskilled and even trained young people try to find a job abroad. The causes of this emigration can be linked primarily to financial consideration. Young people on the brink of setting a family or a carrier are in need of material goods, which cannot be attained in our town or region, leaving these persons with no other choice but to look for them elsewhere.

In the majority of cases, young people attending a university move to a university town far from their permanent residence. So, in this case, an internal migration emerges. After graduating the university, only a small percentage chooses to return and to apply their knowledge at home, in their own environment, this way contributing to the economic, cultural, and political development of their hometown or region. The causes of this phenomenon are to be found in the limited number of available jobs, the candidates having hard times in finding a job in their area of expertise. In these conditions, being home does not guarantee financial security anymore.

In the job descriptions of the local authority employees are not listed any mandatory tasks regarding migration-related issues, which is partly due to the low number of employees and the lack of specialists. Nevertheless, several measures have been taken to mitigate the effects of this phenomenon.

In order to treat these problems, the local authority has initiated the development of several middle- and long term strategies. This attempt has been materialized in the “Come Home” program, aimed to persuade young intellectuals to return home. A similar initiative is the “Sepsi Network”, an Internet platform that aims to maintain contacts with the thousands of people emigrated from Sf. Gheorghe. These initiatives will be further discussed later on in this chapter.

Apart from the initiatives mentioned above, the local authority, as well as the Covasna County Council, has offered jobs for young university graduates. Due to the restrictions concerning employment in state institutions (part of the austerity measures related to economic recession), the number of these young public service employees is minimal however. A few university graduates were hired in different areas, some of them as councilors in the management of local problems. The case of the County Council is similar. Being able to employ a larger number of young graduates compared to the municipal authority, the Council contributed to the strengthening of the local connections, and keeps sending messages that can keep, or even bring young people home.

The local university, due to the lack of departments of social sciences, does not perform research on the subject of migration. Therefore, the Covasna County Statistical Office ( *Direcția Județeană de Statistică Covasna*) can be considered the main data source, providing local and county level data. Besides the data gathered in the 2002 census, the Statistical Office has its own data sources.

The reliability of the data regarding migration seems to be compromised, as few of the out-migrants announce the authorities about their intentions. The local authority has neither an office for migration issues, nor a comprehensive action plan to treat the problems brought on by migration. Nonetheless, it has developed several policies aimed to mitigate this tendency.

In 2009, the Sf. Gheorghe Local Authority launched the “Come Home” program. Its goal has been to encourage young intellectuals to move back home. According to the decisions issued by the City Council, young couples received a plot of land from the Local Authority, on which, according to the program, they had to build a house within 2 years, based on pre-established construction plans.

Initially, young couples had to contribute with 55 percent to the expenses of the construction, which later on was modified to 10 percent. These alleviations were necessary because the implementation

of the program in the first three years was hindered by the economic crisis. Numerous couples proved to be interested, however, they were not able to meet the conditions, especially the one stipulating that they have to own half of the building's value, even as under the form of construction materials. Therefore, the Local Authority divided up the plots of lands and reduced the amount of contribution on the side of the beneficiaries.

In 2012, the Local Authority restarted the "Come Home" program, consigning apartments to 28 employees of cultural and educational institutions. The building lot of 3600 square meters and the two buildings located on it were refurbished with governmental aid, the result being 24 one-bedroom flats and four bigger, family apartments. These were offered as staff accommodation apartments to young persons working in the domains of culture and education.

The contract specifies that the institutions where beneficiaries work can charge a rent up to 21 Euros per month, but they can chose to offer the flats for free. The city does not charge the concerned institutions for these services, this being its way to promote young people who stayed at home or came back after finishing their studies. The flats were consigned to the institutions in September 2012, and, by the end of the year, the new inhabitants occupied all flats.

Another program developed by the local authority aimed at decreasing the emigrational tendency is the "Sepsi Network", an internet platform dedicated to the thousands of emigrants originating from Sf. Gheorghe.<sup>21</sup> The network connects people who are somehow linked to the city but currently live elsewhere, and informs them about the new opportunities in the city.

Along with the presented public policies, a new development strategy is taking shape. That is, the local authority will offer support to the light industry with the aim of creating new workplaces.

To conclude, we can assert that a local office that, among others, would produce local statistics and draw up plans aimed to tackle migration-problems represents an immediate necessity. Basically, stakeholders agreed regarding the establishment of such an office, yet decisions are waiting to be formalized.

#### **4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In our country report we focused on the main internal sources of data on population stock and international migration. Among the administrative data sources we discussed the population register and the registers of foreigners. Then we presented the calculations effectuated by the NIS on annual population stock and the census results.

One of the main problems that affect the whole Romanian system of statistical data production is the lack of a consistently used definition of the country's population. During the period of state-socialism there was a steadily used definition which was applied by all institutions involved in population registration. In this era, the Romanian population was defined as the totality of Romanian citizens with legal residence/address in Romania. The 1992 census (and previous similar events) used still this definition of the population.

In 2002, the NIS (according to UN recommendations) changed the (census) definition of the Romanian population. The long-term resident foreign citizens were included, whereas the Romanian citizens who were staying abroad for a long period of time (at least 1 year) were excluded. As a consequence, after the 2002 census, NIS calculations on annual population stock refer to the stable population defined in accordance with the United Nations' recommendations.

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<sup>21</sup> <http://sepsinet.ro/>

Although changing the definition had positive effects from the perspective of international comparability, and offered new possibilities of migration-related analysis, it created serious inconsistencies within the Romanian data production system. These were caused by the fact that the logic of the population register was not modified, despite transferring registration to local authorities in 2005 and setting up a computerized system in 2006. The population register contains all Romanian citizens irrespective of having or not having residence in Romania. Furthermore, the registers of foreign citizens residing in Romania were not integrated into the population register. As a consequence, there is a duality in the definitions applied to the Romanian population. On the one hand, the population register (and all the Romanian administration except for NIS) operates uninterruptedly with the term of *legal population*, which is a definition elaborated during the state-socialist period. On the other hand, the NIS operates with the term of *usual population*, for which the definition was put down by international statistical institutions. This duality represents many times the source of all confusions.

Another problem is that the administrative registers and data collection process of the NIS is not (or in the best case is only partially) integrated. NIS has its own system of data production, which is independent to a great extent from primary institutions responsible for registration. This is not only true in the case of population statistics, but also in the case of educational statistics, for instance. Here the NIS and the Ministry of Education have parallel systems of data production and both deliver data on the educational system (which are, of course, highly inconsistent). We consider the working of these parallel and non-integrated systems ineffective and a waste of energy.

The second problem regarding the data production system is related to the characteristics of international migration after the change of the political regime. During state-socialism, the administrative definition used for the term “migration” fitted to a great degree to the actual processes. Emigration (as it is depicted in the classical demographic models too) in the biography of migrants was a singular event through which the migrant lost his/her status as member of the sending society and received (or started to take over) membership in the host society.<sup>22</sup> After the fall of the Iron Curtain, the real migration processes is no more fitted to this model. Migration is no longer a single event but a long process with undetermined outcomes. This new characteristic of migration was encapsulated (and often overemphasized by analysts) by the term of *circular migration*. Romanian sociologists and demographers suggested through this concept that out-migrants are absent only temporarily and they will return in time. Recent studies highlighted, however, that the intentions and decisions of migrants can change over time and are severely affected by the labor market and other institutional contexts of the host society.

Besides the inadequacy of the demographic model of migration, a more serious problem has appeared on administrative level. Post-socialist emigration countries proved not being able to administer or to register the out migration. Romanian emigration statistics (which were relatively reliable during state-socialism) now capture just a tiny segment of international migration. According to the World Bank, 2.8 million of Romanian citizens were settling abroad, mostly in Western Europe, North America and Israel. By a comparison, according to the official NIS statistics on migration, only 121 thousand emigrants left the country after 2001. This means that NIS highly overestimates the annual population stock. The difference in the case of the 20-35 aged group, the group mostly affected by out-migration, can reach even 20 percent. As a consequence, all demographic indicators and calculations based on this reference population are unreliable.

Another particular problem occurred due to the changes in the citizenship acquisition possibilities. From 1991, Romania offers citizenship for ethnic Romanians from neighboring countries in a preferential procedure. According to the new legislation, ethnic Romanians and their descendants who lost Romanian citizenship due to the Soviet (or Bulgarian) annexation of Romanian territories

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<sup>22</sup> See Kovács –Melegh (2000).

could receive Romanian citizenship without a Romanian residence. In spite of the fact that many persons applied to benefit of this entitlement, there are no transparent, publicly available statistics regarding ethnic Romanians who received Romanian citizenship.

In the NIS statistics immigrants are defined as foreign nationals who reside in Romania in agreement with Romanian authorities. Consequently, the majority of effective in-migrants (ethnic Romanians from Moldova and Ukraine, and returning migrants, respectively) do not appear in Romanian statistics as immigrants. They (might) appear only in the population register.

To sum up, Romania can produce data according to the Regulation (EC) No. 862/2007 only partially. On the one hand, an integrated system of registration, where both foreigners and nationals are included, does not exist. Data published by Eurostat on usually resident population having foreign citizenship does not correspond with data published by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. On the other hand, data on emigration and population stock are highly inaccurate.

Our recommendations concerning the data production system on migration are the following:

- (1) The redesign and integration of the population register and the registers of foreigners. It would be useful to have an integrated database not only on the legal population, but on the usual population too.
- (2) The elaboration of a transparent data production system on new Romanian citizens.
- (3) The integration of data concerning new Romanian citizens into the NIS annual data on population stock.

## Annexes

### Annex 1. Emigration flow registered in Romania and immigration flow from Romania registered in some of the main receiving countries

#### 3. Emigration to Spain registered in Romania and immigration from Romania registered in Spain (2001-2009)

	Emigration to Spain registered in Romania	Immigration from Romania registered in Spain	% covered by Romanian registration
2001	616	23 295	2,6
2002	172	48 330	0,4
2003	186	69 942	0,3
2004	162	103 572	0,2
2005	139	108 294	0,1
2006	330	131 457	0,3
2007	138	197 642	0,1
2008	238	71 482	0,3
2009	547	52 440	1,0
2010	-	60 306	-
Total: 2001-2009	2528	806 454	0,3

Source: Eurostat, NIS

#### 4. Emigration to Italy registered in Romania and immigration from Romania registered in Italy (2001-2009)

	Emigration to Italy registered in Romania	Immigration from Romania registered in Italy	% covered by Romanian registration
2001	-	16 465	
2002	1486	78 385	8,0
2003	1317	66 098	2,5
2004	1993	45 338	3,9
2005	2603	39 715	6,0
2006	2731	271 443	8,5
2007	3393	174 554	0,5

2008	1401	105 597	0,6
2009	1098	92 116	0,9
2010	984	-	
Total: 2002-2009	15 520	797 595	1,9

Source: Eurostat, NIS

#### 5. Emigration to Germany registered in Romania and immigration from Romania registered in Germany (2001-2008)

	Emigration to Germany registered in Romania	Immigration from Romania registered in Germany	% covered by Romanian registration
2001	854	20 142	4,2
2002	1305	23 953	5,4
2003	1938	23 780	8,1
2004	2707	23 545	11,5
2005	2196	23 274	9,4
2006	3110	23 743	13,1
2007	1902	43 894	4,3
2008	1788	48 225	3,7
2009	1938	-	-
2010	-	-	-
Total 2001-2008	15800	230 556	6,9

Source: Eurostat, NIS

#### 6. Emigration to Hungary registered in Romania and immigration from Romania registered in Hungary (2001-2009)

	Emigration to Hungary registered in Romania	Immigration from Romania registered in Hungary	Covered by Romanian registration
2001	680	10 648	6,4
2002	903	10 307	8,8
2003	984	9599	10,3
2004	1553	12 129	12,8
2005	1013	8895	11,4
2006	900	7872	11,4

2007	266	6735	3,9
2008	354	9987	3,5
2009	331	7104	4,7
2010	-	-	-
Total 2001-2009	6984	83 276	8,4

Source: Eurostat, NIS

## Annex 2. 2011 census questions regarding the citizenship and place of birth

### 8. 2011 Romanian census question on citizenship

**22 CITIZENSHIP** (country of citizenship)

22.1 Romania  642

Another citizenship .....

*Question 22.2 applies only to persons who declare they have more than one citizenship.*

22.2 Second citizenship .....

### 9. 2011 Romanian census question on place of birth

**14 PLACE OF BIRTH** (the mother's residence at the moment of the enumerated person's birth)

900  In the enumeration locality

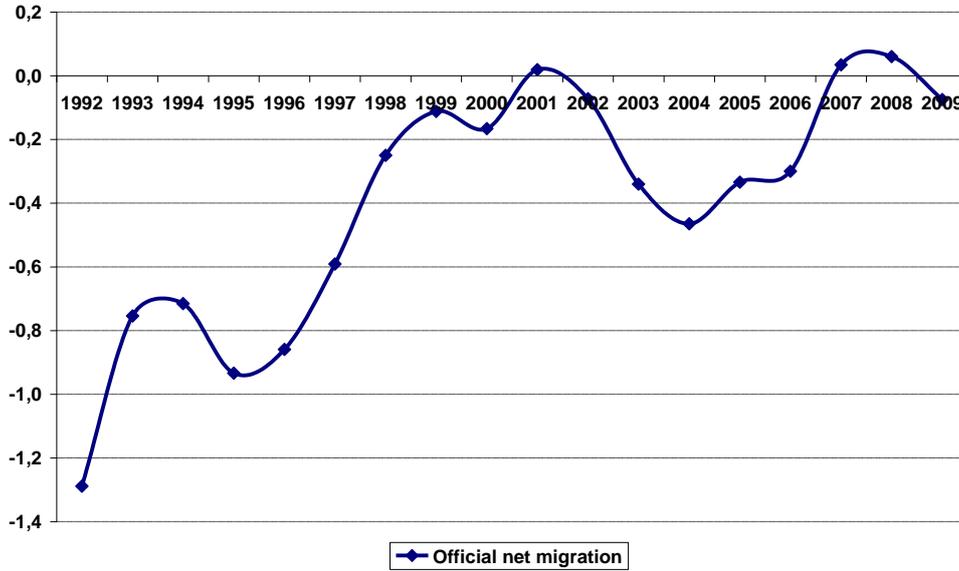
In another locality of .....  
.....County

Municipality/City/Commune .....  
.....

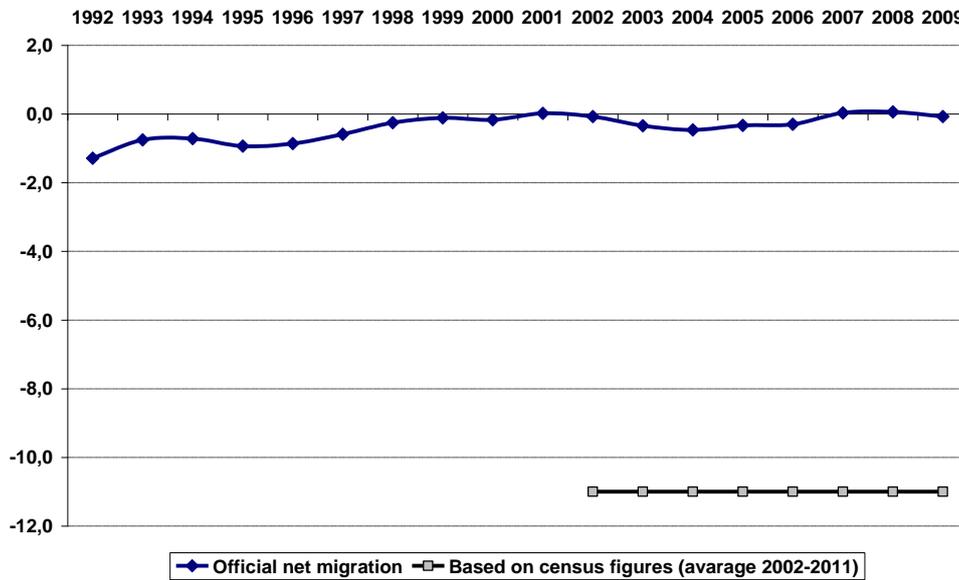
In another country .....

### Annex 3. Net-migration according to official data and calculations based on census figures

#### 10. Official net migration in Romania (1992-2009)



#### 11. Official net migration and calculations based on census figures



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